



GEOG 309
Geography of British Columbia

Instructor: Wil Sahar Patrick

Office Location: DTB B208

Contact: wpatrick@uvic.ca

Office Hours: Thursday, 1:00–2:00 pm (or by appointment).

Lecture Times: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays (TWF), 12:30–13:20

Lecture Location: Cornett (COR) B143

Marking Assistant

Wyatt Maddox, wrmaddox@uvic.ca

Office Hours online in feedback blocks or by appointment.

We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and WSANEC peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Geography 309! The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the regional geography of British Columbia with an integrated approach that combines human and physical geographies. Regions have an important role as bounded spatial constructs that fit between the local and the national, or national and global. Places are overlapped and intersected by different regions created by cultural, social, economic, political, physical and biological relationships and processes that structure our lives and are constantly negotiated. Our regional identities give us a sense of place and shape our experience of the world.

The first half of the course builds a foundation for understanding British Columbia by engaging with physical geography, biogeography, and historical Indigenous and settler geographies. Exploring the creation of British Columbia as a physical environment and a region helps us to better examine the cultural, economic, political, and social landscapes we live in. The second half of the course expands on these frameworks through topical explorations of contemporary issues within the province. By researching and writing a course research paper through a scaffolded approach, students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into topic of their choosing and develop their critical and analytical skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objective of the course is to encourage:

- A familiarity with geographies of British Columbia;
- A deeper understanding of geographical concepts and frameworks; and,
- An appreciation for the complex spatial processes that shape the province.

The course aims to develop:

- Research and reading skills through weekly readings guided assignments;
- Communication skills through lecture discussions and writing assessments; and,
- Project management skills through the scaffolded Geography of British Columbia Research Paper.

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: BRIGHTSPACE

We will be using the Brightspace course management system as a medium for the posting of relevant course materials and related course information (<https://bright.uvic.ca>).

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: [uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/](https://bright.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/)
- Geography Department Chair: geogchair@uvic.ca
- Geography Undergraduate Advising: geogadvising@uvic.ca

READINGS

All reading materials will be available on the Brightspace page for this class at least a week prior (<https://bright.uvic.ca>).

Course readings are incorporated into lectures and compliment material presented in the slides. Although slides will be posted to Brightspace within a day following the lecture, the slides are not a substitute for material discussed in the class nor the assigned readings. Relying solely on the slides will not facilitate a good grasp of course material (see the **Grading System** below).

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Week	Lecture Date	Topic	Course Notes
1	September 9	Course Introduction	
	September 11	Regional Geography	
2	September 15	Research Paper Proposal	
	September 16	Physical Geography of British Columbia	
	September 18		
3	September 22	Biogeography of British Columbia	Last day for 100% reduction of second term fees for dropped courses
	September 23		
	September 25		Last day for adding courses that begin in the first term
4	September 29		September 28: Research Paper Proposal Due
	September 30	University Closed (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)	Last day for paying first term fees without penalty
	October 2	Research Paper Literature Review	
5	October 6	Historical Geography of British Columbia: Indigenous Landscapes	
	October 7		
	October 9		
6	October 13	Historical Geography of British Columbia: Settler Landscapes	Last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees for standard courses
	October 14		
	October 16		
	October 20	Research Paper Case-Study	

7	October 21	Midterm	
	October 23		
8	October 27	Forestry Economic Geographies, Environmentalism, and Migration	October 26: Research Paper Literature Review Due
	October 28		
	October 30		October 31: Last day for withdrawing from first term courses without penalty of failure
9	November 3	Wildfires Rural Geographies, Indigenous Land Management, and Climate	
	November 4		
	November 6		
10	November 10	Reading Break	November 9–11: Reading Break for all faculties.
	November 11		
	November 13		
11	November 17	Final Research Paper	November 16: Research Paper Case-Study Due
	November 18	Tourism Cultural Geography and Urban Geography	November 18: Medlina Quintaro Guest Lecture
	November 20		
12	November 24	Students' Choice	
	November 25		
	November 27		
13	December 1	Pipelines Political Geography and Indigenous Sovereignty	
	December 2		
	December 4		December 7: Final Research Paper Due

EVALUATION

Research Paper Assignments	30%
Final Research Paper	20%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	30%

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Geography of British Columbia Research Paper (50%)

In this course, we discuss the spatial processes that shape British Columbia with a thematic approach that explore historical and contemporary issues in the province. Regions are landscapes in transition continually constructed through contested processes. The purpose of the Research Paper is to provide the opportunity for each student to examine a case study in British Columbia through the lens of geography.

Topics will vary from one student to another, but the overall themes to be considered should relate in some fashion to the broad thematic areas of this course.

Students are encouraged to write their papers using the Online version of Office 365 Word provided by the university, or another like Pages for Mac OS, that maintains version history.

The Geography of British Columbia Research Paper will consist of five components with bold headings, and below is a guide to help you format the paper:

1. **Introduction** (approx. 1 page): Introduce the goal and objectives of the paper in this short section. Also make sure to explain how the paper will be organized so the reader has a 'road map' of the structure of the paper as a whole.
2. **Literature Review** (approx. 4 pages): this section should discuss literature on broad theme of relevance to your research topic. For instance, if you were to write a paper on a particular case study of a dispute over a street name in Victoria, this section would review the geographic literature on the cultural politics of street naming more generally without getting into the details of the Victoria case study.
3. **Case Study** (approx. 3 pages): In this section, provide a descriptive account of the case study you have chosen to investigate drawing upon relevant media sources, etc.
4. **Discussion** (approx. 3 pages): In this section, provide a critical analysis of your case study with the framework and concepts developed your literature review.
5. **Conclusion** (approx. 1 page): In this concluding section, provide a summary of your main arguments and discuss how your analysis of the case study contributes to the broader literature in social and cultural geography.

For both in-text citations and your bibliography, please use the guide posted on Brightspace.

Note: all images, maps, photographs, etc., should be listed with appropriate reference numbers (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) in an appendix at the end of the paper, not within the text itself, although you should make direct reference to each figure in the body of the essay, by saying "(Figure 1)," etc., at the end of a sentence just as you would for in-text citations. Make sure to also include a "figure caption" placed directly below the image that describes the content of each figure.

Below are step-by-step instructions for completing this assignment:

- 1) **Selecting a topic:** Get an early start on thinking about your topic. Students should consult their instructor or marking assistant during office hours about selecting a relevant topic.
- 2) **Submitting a proposal (10%):** During Week 4, submit a proposal on Brightspace including: your name, preliminary paper title, a purpose statement paragraph explaining the topic and case study to be investigated, and a preliminary bibliography listing at least 10 relevant reference: at least five of which must be academic, peer-reviewed sources.
- 3) **Conducting the research:** Once you have selected a research topic and it has been approved by your instructor or marking assistant, you should continue to collect popular media sources (newspaper or magazine articles) as well as academic sources (geography journal articles, scholarly books, etc.) related to the general topic. Keep in mind that the popular sources you find will likely deal with the details of a particular event, whereas the scholarly literature may address a more general theme of relevance to your topic.
- 4) **Submitting a literature review (10%):** During Week 8, submit the literature review assignment on Brightspace.
- 5) **Submitting a case study (10%):** During Week 11, submit the literature review assignment on Brightspace.
- 6) **Drafting your research paper:** After the initial groundwork is completed for conducting your research, you should begin writing a draft of your paper. The paper should be 10–12 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font size, 2.54 cm margins, not counting any other

accompanying materials such as photographs, maps, etc., all of which should be included in an appendix at the end of the document. Also, please do not include large spaces between paragraphs to increase the page count! The paper should draw upon a combination of popular media, academic geography journal articles/books, and a selection of the assigned readings for this course.

7) Submitting the paper (20%): The paper should be submitted on Brightspace by 11:59pm on Monday, December 7. Late submissions will receive a grade reduction of 20% per day unless there is a previously discussed accommodation.

Detailed instructions for completing each assignment will be provided in Weeks 2, 5, 7, and 11 and uploaded to Brightspace. Submissions for each assignment are due at 11:59 pm on the date listed in the Weekly Calendar above. Students should ignore any white text in assignment instructions. Refer to the rubric for each assignment for assessment criteria. Students are recommended to consult their course instructor and marking assistant to clarify assignment expectations.

Midterm Exam (20%)

The course will have an in-class midterm exam that is cumulative from Week 1 through Week 7. The format for the exam will consist of long answer and essay questions. The midterm exam is cumulative and will be held on October 20 and 23, 2025 during Week 7. Additional instructions will be provided prior to the midterm exam.

Final Exam (30%)

The course will have a final exam that is cumulative of all course content. The format for the final exam will consist of long answer and essay questions. The final exam will be held during the regular final exam period. Additional instructions will be provided prior to the final exam.

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due at **11:59 pm** on the date indicated in the Weekly Calendar. Late assignments and/or project work will be penalized 20% per day. Exceptions will only be granted for “unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, or conflicting responsibilities” as per the [Undergraduate requests for](#)

[academic concessions policy](#), which include medical or compassionate reasons, Indigenous cultural or community obligations, armed forces or emergency service responsibilities, and representing the university. *Only the course instructor can grant exceptions.* I will need to notify your Marking Assistant if an exception is granted.

Exams can only be missed for unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, or conflicting responsibilities as outlined above. Only the course instructor can grant exception. If an exception is granted, the student may be provided at alternate date/time to write the exam. If this date/time is not agreeable for whatever reason the weight of the missed evaluation component will be added to the final exam. If you miss a final exam (regardless of the reason and want the chance to write) you must apply for a [Request for Academic Concession through the registrar's office](#).

Conflicts with work, holidays or travel plans (not covered by unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, or conflicting responsibilities outline above) are not considered an acceptable reason to apply for a deferred assignment or project extension or miss an exam.

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Attendance is expected for lectures. Recordings of lecture material are not provided (see the **Course Policy on Recording of Lectures and use of Course Materials** below). PDF files of lecture slides will be provided following the lecture. If a student misses a lecture, the student should visit office hours to discuss missed material. If the student is not available for office hours, then the student should contact me to schedule another time.

Students are encouraged to sit in the front half of the lecture hall. If a student arrives late to attend the lecture, they should enter the back of the lecture hall and find the first available seat. Late arrivals should avoid obscuring the view of slides for their peers or sitting in the front row. Student who need to leave the lecture early should sit near an exit and depart discretely.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on **cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission, and aiding others to cheat**.

Policy on Academic Integrity: web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php.

Please be advised that in this course you are not authorized to use any form of generative AI. In order to successfully complete course activities, generative AI is not required nor welcomed. Students should not make any use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, among others that use AI for content generation and editing. As the University of Victoria states on its Academic Integrity Policy "Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility." Therefore, I expect you to comply with the course syllabus and I encourage you to enhance your academic experience in this course by refraining from use generative AI.

In the [University of Victoria's Gen AI position statement](#), the university "recognizes that the un-cited or unauthorized use of GenAI in course work may constitute a violation of the university's Academic Integrity policy. To avoid academic integrity violations, students must familiarize themselves with UVic's Academic Integrity policy and with the permissible use of GAITs in each course as determined by the instructor and as explained in the course outline."

COURSE POLICY ON RECORDING OF LECTURES AND USE OF COURSE MATERIALS

According to the university's [Intellectual Property Policy](#) (GV0215), professors and instructors are the authors of their original course materials, lecture notes, and lecture presentations. Accordingly, they own copyright in these materials. A lecture constitutes an instructor's intellectual property. A student must get permission to record the lecture from their instructor. Any material for the course (e.g., lecture notes,

PowerPoints, syllabus, including a recording of a lecture) is made solely for the use of the students registered in the course for research and private study only. These materials must not be posted online or shared with other students without the instructor's permission. In some cases, a student with a perceptual disability will be eligible for an academic accommodation to record a lecture. Please visit the [Centre for Accessible Learning \(CAL\) website](#) for more information. You should be aware that there are [policies and legislation](#) regarding academic accommodation. Should you have any questions please contact the [Copyright Office](#).

EMAIL

Send all email to me using the email address listed on the first page of the syllabus (wpatrick@uvic.ca). Please include the course number (GEOG 309) in the email subject title. I will do my best to respond during business hours (9:00 am – 5:00 pm) promptly to your questions, however I do receive a large volume of emails daily, so it may take up to two business days (Monday – Friday) to receive a response.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible (uvic.ca/services/cal/). The CAL staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

POSITIVITY AND SAFETY

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. If there are any concerns, please contact me.

SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE RESOURCE OFFICE (SVRO)

If you have been directly or indirectly impacted by sexualized violence, reach out to the SVRO for information, advice, resolution options (restorative and disciplinary) as well as support options and referrals. The SVRO is both survivor-centred and trauma-informed in their approach.

eqhr01@uvic.ca
Sedgewick C Wing
www.uvic.ca/svp

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS (EQHR)

UVic Equity and Human Rights is a resource for students, staff and faculty who have experienced discrimination and harassment and are looking for informal and formal resolution options as well as advice, coaching and/or education. We are available for confidential consultations so that you can ask questions and learn your options.

eqhr01@uvic.ca
Sedgewick C Wing
www.uvic.ca/equity

RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's [International Centre for Students](#) is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the [UVic Global Community Initiative](#), including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program. For academic advising-related questions, students in the Geography Department are also encouraged to meet with the Geography Undergraduate Advisor (geogadvising@uvic.ca) as well as an academic advisor in the [Academic Advising Centre](#) early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the [Centre for Academic Communication](#) and the [Math and Stats Assistance Centre](#). International students are also encouraged to contact the International Student Liaison in Geography (Prof. CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, cindyann@uvic.ca), who can assist in making connections with other international and domestic students in the Geography Department and share opportunities for getting involved in departmental activities more broadly.

COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed online and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

STUDENT WELLNESS :

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.* uvic.ca/services/counselling/

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.* uvic.ca/services/health/

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* uvic.ca/services/cal/. *The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.* uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php

DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.